

THE BEACON



Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2005



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FOCUS STILL ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AS WE MOVE INTO NEW FUNDING CYCLES, SECURITY ISSUES

TO: State Emergency Management Directors
FROM: Al Berndt
15 September 2005.

We are now entering our 3rd week of state/local assistance to the survivors of Hurricane Katrina and I wanted to take this opportunity to update you on the status of the State response. At the end of this article I have included what was supposed to have been an article for the Beacon to come out the first of September. Because of Katrina the article was never published on-line but I have now included it, in particular the last paragraph that I wrote.

The past 2 weeks I was at the annual NEMA/DHS convention in Anchorage, Alaska and then took a vacation in Alaska. These past two weeks, the staff of NEMA responded to and handled the State level coordination of activities in support of the hurricane effort. In particular Jon Schwarz and Cindy Newsham have done an outstanding job of leading the State effort in coordination with the Governor's Office.

Currently the State EOC is supporting HHSS and Douglas County in the outreach efforts related to the sheltering, medical and transportation needs of the evacuee's brought into Omaha by FEMA. With the Governor declaring a State Disaster Declaration and the President issuing a Presidential Declaration for Nebraska, this allows for us to cover the State and local costs that might arise from this disaster. Currently 432 family units have registered with FEMA that they are in Nebraska; however this does not give us a total number of individuals within the State. Estimates currently have the total number within the State at 1,200 plus and rising. To date, the Governor has only authorized expenses to be reimbursed as they relate to medical and travel expenses. If anyone is contacted at the local level regarding disaster assistance for evacuee's, please remember to contact HHSS and NEMA for assistance as we want to ensure all eligible expenses are covered.

In light of Hurricane Katrina it is a pretty fair assessment to say there will be changes within DHS that will ultimately affect the 2006 Homeland Security and EMPG programs. As the disaster is becoming larger and more costly, this has the propensity to affect the other grant funding programs. We can only wait and see what is ultimately authorized when Congress passes the Federal Budget for DHS

Activities within NEMA as we continue to support both emergency management and homeland security functions continue to keep the Agency very busy. In the

recent past we held the first of what will be the annual exercise planning workshop, the Haz- Mat/WMD MOU response conference, followed it with the just concluded emergency management basic academy and a series of advanced level courses.

I want to take some time and lay out for each of you the direction our State will be going in the coming months as we continue to integrate into and support both emergency management and the Lt. Governor as homeland security director. The planning section is currently working a very tight deadline of having the State Homeland Security Assessment Strategy updated. This is also being done on the local level as the UASI working group in Douglas, Washington and Sarpy counties have to go through the same process.

We have to re-visit the State Strategy and to ensure we have addressed the identified priorities in the National Preparedness System and HSPD 8. The Lt. Governor is bringing together the Homeland Security Policy Group on the 22nd of September to review and give final approval to the strategy updates. As we anticipate the roll out of the FY2006 grant program, the strategy updates will in a large part guide how we integrate into the National Preparedness Goals, the National Planning Scenarios, the Target Capabilities List, the Universal Task List and last,



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but not least, Resource Typing Initiative. I first talked about these initiatives a year ago and with the new grant program coming out we will see how we have to integrate them into our planning, training and exercising at the State and local level.

Currently NEMA planners and the homeland security planning team are working the initial stages of how to comprehensively roll out the program on a regional basis that allows for synergies between counties and first responders allowing for mutual support in accomplishing the Strategy Goals and Objectives. Even though the grant guidance is not officially out and Congress has not passed the homeland security budget, I believe we see two themes emerging; a reduced level of funding and a greater emphasis on planning in the areas of preparedness and prevention. There seems to be a much greater emphasis coming out of Washington D.C. on these areas as opposed to response and recovery.

This past week, Lt. Governor Sheehy and I were in Washington D.C. for meetings with the new DHS Preparedness Directorate and senior staff. What I stated above were the general themes emerging from the meetings. Over the course of the next month we will see the final drafts of the TCL, UTL and Planning Scenarios that will ultimately set our planning standards. Another area that is emerging on the National level is the development of a fusion process within States for the sharing of intelligence and homeland security information. Currently the NSP has taken the lead on determining the level of need within our State and how to develop the initial fusion process.

For all counties currently participating in the EMPG program, a decision has been reached within DHS and it appears the EMPG will be decoupled from the one-stop shop of grant applications process experienced in 2005. As you continue to work with your board of supervisors please

remember because of changing timelines within DHS I still do not expect the grant to be available until late winter or early spring. Within NEMA we continue to work on this program in terms of grant guidelines, reporting and scope of activities at the State and local level. This next week I am participating in the annual working conference with DHS/FEMA and anticipate that I will receive much clearer guidance on program direction during the conference.

One of the themes I continue to voice within NEMA is that even though we as a State Agency are the State Administrative Agency for the DHS programs, we must not lose sight of the fact we are still NEMA. Reality is, NEMA will still be here after DHS programs end, change, are reduced in funding or what ever and there will still be emergency management work to do. I have continued to stress we are all on the same mission; "to attain and maintain the principles of emergency management on providing the highest quality of support to the citizens of Nebraska". No one program within NEMA is more important than any other program we carry out and our Agency should continue to support the philosophy of; reducing the effects of disasters and emergencies in Nebraska, serving as the State's coordinating agency for Homeland Security and emergency management information and activities and addressing the consequences of terrorism in Nebraska. Collectively and in collaboration with our local partners, I look forward to the coming months to actively work together to implement the new planning and program challenges presented to us by DHS and the implementation of Homeland Security Presidential Directives 5 and 8.



FAIRBURY EXERCISE TESTS LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIRE, EMS WITH METHAMPHETAMINE LAB SCENARIO

Entertainment is sometimes hard to come by in a small town. When you can provide the community with an entertaining spectacle, teach the citizens something new and valuable, and learn something in the process, you have a good thing going.

Fairbury's Meth Awareness Week provided just such a wealth of benefits. Sunday September 18 was a hot late-summer day, just right for the community to gather and watch the city and county emergency services personnel go through their paces. The Fairbury Police Department and the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office put to-



gether a scenario that made use of a vacant house to stage a raid on a suspected meth lab. Law enforcement officers suited up and entered the house, arresting two suspects and chasing a third out to be apprehended by Rex, the canine component of the raid.

An explosion subsequent to the initial entry team's sweep injured both fire and police personnel, who had to be rescued and decontaminated before being removed to hospital facilities. Fairbury Fire stood by for fire suppression and decontamination duties, the Jefferson County Emergency



Management Agency provided support equipment and logistics, and Jefferson County Ambulance provided EMS services.

LEPC CONFERENCE DRAWS TOGETHER BUSINESS, INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT EXPERTS AND RESPONDERS

The 2005 Region 7 Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and Tribal Emergency Response Commission (TERC) Conference drew first responders, emergency management personnel and representatives from business and industry to Kansas City this August.

The purpose of the conference is to bring together experts from the private sector and government in the field of chemical risk and safety to learn about protection from chemical hazards.

The conference offers human health providers and first responders the latest information about hazardous materials, emergency planning and environmental risks.

Topics of sessions at the conference this year included the Metropolitan Medical Response System, critical incident stress management, jurisdictional issues of quarantine and evacuation, transportation and industry training, LEPC basics, federal/state response capabilities, homeland security, and radiological preparedness issues.

The LEPC and TERC is the main source



Training at the Conference included the identification of hazardous materials in the field.



Tonya Smith (right) of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) conducted a state breakout session to discuss topics applicable to Nebraska LEPCs.

for information about hazards in the community. The Environmental Protection Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in conjunction with private industry, tribal, state and local governments have developed the conference to help LEPCs/TERCs conduct their jobs safely and more effectively.

Preceding the Conference, a Radiation Emergency Response meeting was held for radiological emergency preparedness entities in the region.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) TRAINING DELIVERED TO STATE EMPLOYEES AT CAPITOL

Prepares citizens to survive and assist while waiting for first responders

As part of a growing program in Nebraska, 24 state employees at the Capitol Building underwent Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training in late September.

The CERT program is one of the elements that make up Citizens Corps, a national program created following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Citizen Corps consists of CERT, the Fire Corps, Neighborhood Watch, the Medical Reserve Corps, and Volunteers in Police Service. Citizen Corps is administered in Nebraska by the Volunteer Services Commission, under the auspices of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. There are currently more than 850 Nebras-



CERT trainees evacuate an "injured victim" from a darkened tunnel beneath the State Capitol Building. The participants underwent 20 hours of training in the program.

kans trained in CERT, operating under 13 local Citizen Corps Councils.

The training at the Capitol was administered by instructors from the Lincoln-Lancaster County Citizen Corps. Eventually, the volunteers trained in this class will form the nucleus of a Capitol CERT team, made up of members from the approximately 700 employees in the Capitol building.

The would stand ready to provide immediate response to any emergency that might occur at the Capitol. Among the skills CERT team members would be able to provide would be fire suppression, basic medical response, evacuation assistance, and immediate search and rescue functions.

Citizens interested in CERT training or other Citizen Corps programs should contact their local county emergency manager, or call Susan Burton, Citizen Corps Coordinator at the Nebraska Volunteer Services Commission, (402) 471-6226.



Once the victims were evacuated, they underwent triage to determine the type and extent of their injuries.

NEMA ACADEMY

The Fall 2005 NEMA Academies are history, with 24 graduates of the Advanced Academy and 30 from the Basic side.

Basic Academy students got a special treat as they were favored with a guided tour of Memorial Stadium and its special security concerns, and a session in the UNL Emergency Operations Center.



An extensive tour of Memorial Stadium and its security issues and technology was the highlight of the Basic Academy week.



The Fall 2005 Basic Academy lineup included 30 students from varying disciplines and jurisdictions across the state. Obviously, someone slipped out early, before the class picture was taken.

NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH TIMELY IN 2005

Governor Dave Heineman proclaimed September National Preparedness in Nebraska, and remarked on the timeliness of the event in light of the recent Gulf Coast storms.

In a news conference that brought together the Governor, Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy, Health & Human Services System Policy Secretary Christine Peterson, Chief Medical Officer Joann Schaefer, NEMA Assistant Director Al Berndt and Department of Administrative Services Director Lori McClurg, Nebraska's preparedness and performance took center stage. From sending assets to the hurricane-ravaged South and taking in evacuees, to training and exercising, to citizen involvement in disaster response, the state's programs are the envy of state and federal officials across the country. Now, more than ever, preparedness requires foresight and planning, and Nebraska will continue to lead the way.



Governor Dave Heineman speaks to the media, as behind him wait (left to right) Christine Peterson, Al Berndt, Lori McClurg, Joanne Schaefer and Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy.

WIDE, LONG LOAD



Reported by Fillmore County Emergency Management - This truck came through Nebraska via Beatrice, Hebron, Geneva, Hastings and then west. It was carrying a turbine from a nuclear plant being dismantled to Utah for burial in the desert. The load weighed somewhere around 375 tons. This is apparent, due to the number of wheels it took to distribute the load evenly so it did not exceed highway load limits. It basically took up both driving lanes and traveled at a speed of between 20 and 30 mph. The load was placarded with a radioactive placard. As you will see there is one vehicle pulling the load and one vehicle pushing the load. There were two escort vehicles in front and one behind. A local NSP Trooper who spoke with the driver was told the amount of radioactivity emitted was in the micro-rem's and for all practical purpose you naturally get more radioactivity from normal sunlight. The route was apparently cleared by the Nebraska Department of Roads, according to the Trooper.

COLUMBUS/PLATTE COUNTY EMA HOSTS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DAY IN PAWNEE PARK

The Columbus\Platte County Emergency Management Agency and the Prairie Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross co-sponsored a "Family Preparedness Day" Sunday, September 18.

The event was held in conjunction with Governor Dave Heineman's proclamation designating September as National Preparedness Month in Nebraska.

Activities were held at the Columbus Pawnee Park from 12:00 pm to 4:30 pm. Columbus/Platte County Emergency Management Director Tim Hofbauer featured the agency's personnel and equipment, and included an impressive array of first responders and organizations, including: East Central District Health Department, Columbus E-911 Center, Columbus Animal Control, Therapy Dogs Inc., Columbus Public Library, Civil Air Patrol, Safe Kids, Columbus Fire and Hazmat,

Salvation Army, Columbus Hospital, United Way - 211, Youth in Action - Project Extra Mile, Platte Center Emergency Management, Humphrey Fire Department, and Loup Public Power.

Also present were the Platte County Extension Service, Columbus Police Department, Platte County Dive/Rescue Team, Columbus Girl Scouts Troop 263, Emily Wemhoff's personal fire Safety Crusade, Three Eagles Communication, Midwest Medical Transport, and Salvation Army volunteers, who prepared lunch for visitors and participants. Fairbury Foods and Cargill Foods provided hotdogs and hamburgers.

The Columbus Police Department distributed gun locks, E911 provided 911 electrical outlet plugs, and the Columbus Fire Department offered demonstrations throughout the afternoon.

DEQ Unveils New Digs

Nebraska's Department of Environmental Quality opened the doors to its newest facility for inspection, and displayed a more centralized and efficient way of performing their duties.

The large new complex on Van Dorn street in southwest Lincoln pulls together functions and equipment that was



ample storage space, vehicle access and a new cleaning area to allow staff to load and unload sampling equipment and supplies; lets vehicles stored on-site remain fully loaded due to increased security; locates the Bio Lab in an area that is easily accessible to staff and fully compliant with all fire-code regulations; houses the new Emergency Response Vehicle and all its supporting equipment in one secure, 24/7 area; provides an additional location for agency training, accommodating classes of up to 40 students; and provides alternate workspace for disaster planning/business recovery, to assure agency continuity of operations in the event of a disruption.

formerly scattered across multiple locations.

Now co-located at the new complex are: state-owned remediation equipment to be reused at future remediations sites across Nebraska; the Air and Water Program sampling operations and bio lab; the new Emergency Response Vehicle; and training room space with computer connectivity.

The new location pulls together functions and equipment previously housed and stored in the Atrium in Lincoln, in a bunker location in the Hastings area, and in numerous storage facilities spread across a large area.

The Van Dorn complex enables the Petroleum Remediation Section to consolidate its equipment storage needs; provides





TEREX or TERREX - depending on how you look at it. Currently the State Exercise Design Team is working on the upcoming **TEREX** exercises. **TEREX 2005** a state wide functional exercise, started in January of 2004 with the state design team working on objectives. From that meeting, **TERREX 2005.5** was born. **TEREX 5.5** which it is now called, will be a full scale exercise affecting 10 state agencies and over half the state. In June of this year the design team started planning for **TEREX 2006**. Stay tuned for details to come.

Upcoming Training provided by NEMA:

NeHSEEP - Nebraska Homeland Security Exercise Eval Program, held in North Platte Oct 3-6th. NeHSEEP sets the stage for exercise development. The first two days focus on exercise management and the final two days focus on evaluation. It's a great learning course. This is the prerequisite for Exercise Development.

Exercise Development - Held in Beatrice Feb 27th- March 03, 2006. This is a week-long course on exercise development combining HSEEP and NIMS with an exercise at the end. Great course! Notice prerequisite of HSEEP.

LESSONS LEARNED

The Keith County Citizens Corps put its training and preparation to work recently, and demonstrated the value of the volunteer-based organization.

The City of Ogallala received word on Thursday, August 25 of the presence of e.coli or fecal coliform bacteria in the municipal water supply. That prompted a boil water notice.

They were able to secure drinking water from a variety of sources: Salvation Army, Wal-Mart, Wal-Mart Distribution Center, Pepsi Cola Distributing, Coca Cola Distributing and Safeway.

Beginning on the evening of August 25 through the morning of August 31, 38 Keith County Citizen Corps Volunteers handled the twice-daily distribution of this bottled water supply. The primary distribution point was the Ogallala Fire Department, with some water delivered to the homes of those unable to pick up their supply.

All in all, about 28 pallets of water were distributed from Thursday evening, August 25 through Wednesday morning, August 31.

The breakdown of the donated water was:
Safeway Food Stores – 5 pallets – delivered!
Salvation Army – 2.5 pallets
Pepsi Cola Distributing – 3 pallets – delivered!
Coca Cola Distributing – 30 cases – delivered!
Wal-Mart – 21 pallets – delivered!

There were even 5.5 pallets over and above all of that, with 1.5 pallets going to the Ogallala Fire Department for storage and 4 pallets to the Salvation Army in North Platte.

For more photos and information on this incident, please go to:

<http://www.kc911.net/waterhandout.htm>

NEBRASKA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY TRAINING SCHEDULE

The NEMA Training Program provides emergency management training in a number of areas. Below is the training schedule through March of 2006.

If you are interested in registering for any of the listed training opportunities, please visit our website at http://www.nebema.org/index_html?page=content/training/Training_Schedule.htm, where you can follow links to receive information about and register for our training courses.

After applying for a course, students should check the NEMA web site within a few days to see if they have been accepted, and to get the latest information concerning the course location and administrative instructions.

From the website:

- To register please click on the intended course
- To check the status of enrollment, course and hotel location information or any other special requirements click on the "Participant's List/Acceptance Letter. This list will be updated twice a week.
- Once a brochure becomes available for each specific course, you may click on the word "Brochure" listed under the "Date" column to either view it or print out this information. Any student who is unable to attend a course for which they have enrolled and been accepted must notify the training department as soon as possible.-

In the event that the number of applicants for a scheduled course is insufficient to warrant proceeding with the course, notice of cancellation and/or rescheduling will be sent to all applicants of record as soon as possible.

TRAINING - CALENDAR YEAR 2005-2006

NOTE Our emails have changed, so email addresses printed in the brochures will be wrong. To contact the class manager, please click on their name in the course manager column on the website. Thanks!

<u>COURSE & REGISTRATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>COURSE MANAGER</u>
NeHSEEP	<u>October 3-6th</u> (Brochure)	<u>North Platte</u> Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites	Tonya Smith
Exercise Development	<u>February 27th-</u> <u>March 3rd, 2006</u> (Brochure)	<u>Beatrice</u> Holiday Inn Express	DeWayne Morrow
Avanced Academy	<u>March 27-29, 2006</u>	<u>TBD</u>	Kent Studnicka
Basic Academy	<u>March 27-31, 2006</u>	<u>TBD</u>	Dave Reisen